

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed December 4, 2002, the Examiner states that the information disclosure statement filed October 9, 2001 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2). Applicants filed an information disclosure statement (IDS) on November 28, 2001 but did not file an IDS on October 9, 2001. Applicants now resubmit the IDS filed on November 28, 2001. The original IDS included a German Office Action which cited the references. This is what caused the documents to be listed. The IDS now specifically refers to the German Office Action. Accordingly, Applicants request consideration of the IDS. If the Examiner has any further questions regarding the IDS, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicant's representative.

The drawings are objected to as not including reference sign 30. The drawings are amended to include reference character 30.

The drawings are further objected to because the Office Action alleges that element 36 is not described in the specification. Reference character 36 is described in the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 11 and is specifically recited on line 13 of page 6. This paragraph has been updated for clarification. However, the original specification included the reference character 36.

The drawings are further objected to as not properly listing multiple elements. The drawings have been updated such that lists of elements include each element separated by a comma. The drawings are also objected to as not showing all of the claimed features. Figs. 5 and 6 are added to depict the claimed features. Support for Fig. 5 is found in the paragraph starting at page 8, line 4. Support for Fig. 6 is found in the paragraph starting on page 8, line 10.

In view of the above drawing changes and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that objection to the drawings should now be withdrawn.

Claims 4, 6, 8, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for using the term "sleeve-like". Claims 4, 8, and 9 are amended to recite the term --sleeve--. In view of the amendments, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 4, 6, 8, and 9, now be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,030,750 (Vermeersch) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,832,821 (Petersen).

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Vermeersch and Petersen in further view of U.S. Patent No. 4,438,697 (Doliner).

Claims 4, 6, 8, and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Vermeersch in view of Petersen and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,687,647 (Vrotacoe).

Claims 10, 11, and 13-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Vermeersch in view of Petersen and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,070,528 (Fleischmann).

The present invention relates to a stand-alone device external to a printing machine for producing a printing plate. The printing plate is removable from the device with low space requirements and with little effort (see page 3, lines 2-4 of the application). The apparatus of the present invention includes a frame 2 that is a stand-alone device arranged externally to a printing machine as shown in Fig. 1. A mount 3 on the frame 2 is arranged for holding a first end of a carrier cylinder by a cantilever mounting. A blank printing plate 16 is arrangeable on the carrier cylinder and an image setting device 15 moves relative to the carrier cylinder for setting an image on the printing plate. The combination of the stand-alone frame and the cantilevered mounting of the carrier cylinder provide full access to the carrier cylinder which is not provided in the prior art devices for producing printing plates.

Independent claim 1 is amended to recite that the frame is a stand-alone device external to a printing machine. This limitation is disclosed in Fig. 1.

Vermeersch discloses a method for making a lithographic printing plate involving on press development. Vermeersch discloses that the imaging apparatus may be a standalone device or it may be incorporated directly into the printing machine (see col. 8, lines 28-31). However, in the specific embodiment disclosed in the drawings, the cylinder 50 is a form cylinder or plate cylinder of a printing machine (see col. 9, lines 14-30). Vermeersch discloses only that the cylinder 50 is supported within a printing press but does not disclose more details regarding the support of the cylinder 50. Accordingly, Vermeersch fails to disclose the claimed stand-alone frame with a cantilever mounted carrier cylinder and image-setting device mounted thereon.

Peterson fails to teach what Vermeersch lacks. Petersen discloses a driven cylinder of a printing machine which is mounted in a sidewall of a printing machine. However, Petersen also fails to disclose a standalone device external to a printing machine with a carrier cylinder on a mounting connected to a frame. Accordingly, the combination of Vermeersch and Petersen fails to teach or suggest the cantilevered carrier cylinder mounted on a stand-alone frame external to a printing machine.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is allowable over Vermeersch in view of Petersen.

Dependent claims 3 is amended and now recites a flexible belt drive. Support for this limitation is in Fig. 4 of the application. It is respectfully submitted that this drive is not shown in the prior art of record.

Dependent claims 6 and 7 are amended to clarify that the carrier cylinder is one of a plurality of carrier cylinders, each being selectively mountable on the mounting at the image

setting position. Support for this limitation is found in the specification at page 8, lines 4-9. The Office Action states that the limitation of claims 6 and 7 is disclosed in Vermeersch at col. 9, lines 24-28. However, this section of Vermeersch merely states that the cylinder 50 may be mounted in a printing machine having a multiple printing array arranged in linear form or in a satellite printing machine having a large central impression cylinder and several blanket cylinders arranged around it. It is respectfully submitted that Vermeersch fails to teach or suggest a plurality of carrier cylinder having different diameters which are each selectively receivable on the mounting at the image setting position. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent claims 6 and 7 are allowable over Vermeersch and Peterson for these additional reasons.

Dependent claim 8 recites "an intermediate sleeve borne on said carrier cylinder onto which said printing plate can be clamped, said intermediate sleeve being one of plural intermediate sleeves of different external diameter which can be borne on said carrier cylinder". The Office Action points to reference character 280 of Vermeersch and col. 9, lines 24-28 to reject this claim. Reference character 280 in Vermeersch refers to a sleeve that is part of a lens system which is used to set the image on the cylinder 50. Since the part indicated by reference character 280 is part of a lens system, it is not mounted on the cylinder 50. Therefore, Vermeersch fails to teach any intermediate sleeve on the cylinder 50. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent claim 8 is allowable for these additional reasons.

Dependent claim 9 is amended and now recites "the carrier cylinder is operative for selectively receiving printing plates of different diameters". The Office Action states that this limitation is disclosed by col. 9, lines 11-13 of Vermeersch. That section of Vermeersch discusses a void 60 along the circumference of the cylinder 50. The void 60 is not adjustable. Accordingly, the diameter of the printing plate wrapped around the cylinder is always the

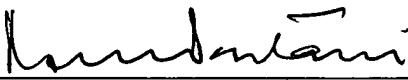
diameter of the outer surface of the cylinder. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent claim 9 is allowable for these additional reasons.

New dependent claim 16 recites that the mounting is arranged on the upper surface of the frame. New dependent claim 17 recites that the upper surface of the frame is planar. The arrangement of the mounting and frame recited in new claims 16 and 17 is not disclosed in the prior art of record.

The application is deemed to be in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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